鸡蛋不肯浮，我把杯子打翻了

科学老师布置了一个作业：想办法让鸡蛋在水里浮起来。我放学回家就翻冰箱，挑了一枚最大的鸡蛋，又翻出一个玻璃杯。妈妈问我需不需要帮忙，我说不用，这还不简单。

我把鸡蛋放进杯子里，它咕咚一声沉到杯底，躺得平平的，像睡熟了。我往杯子里加盐，一勺，用筷子搅。盐化了，水变浑了一点，鸡蛋一动不动。我有点急，又加了两勺，搅的时候筷子碰着鸡蛋，磕了一下，它翻了个身，还是躺着。

我端起杯子想凑近看，胳膊肘碰到了桌上一摊没收拾的积木。杯子晃了一下，我手忙脚乱去扶，没扶住，哗啦，整杯盐水打翻了。水顺着桌沿往下淌，鸡蛋滚出来，在桌上打了个滚，停在我的作业本旁边。我的作业本湿了一角。

我愣了两秒，眼泪一下子涌上来。忙了半天，鸡蛋没浮起来，杯子还翻了，本子也毁了。我把鸡蛋往杯子里一塞，扭头回房间，把门关上。

过了好一会儿，妈妈敲门进来，什么也没说，把一块干抹布放在我手里。我们回到厨房，把桌子擦干，把湿的作业本一页一页摊开晾在窗台上。妈妈重新倒了一杯清水，说：接着来呗，盐又没洒完。我吸吸鼻子，拿起勺子。

这一次我学乖了，杯子放得离桌边远远的。一勺盐，搅十下，看看；再加一勺，再搅，再看。水越来越浑，杯底积了一层没化完的盐。我数着，第五勺的时候，鸡蛋动了一下，离开了杯底。第六勺，它摇摇晃晃地站起来了。第七勺，鸡蛋浮出了水面，露出一小片湿漉漉的脑门。

我喊妈妈来看，我们俩趴在桌边，看那颗鸡蛋稳稳地浮在盐水顶上。妈妈问：打翻杯子的时候你想过放弃吗？我承认，想过。妈妈说：那你后来怎么又拿起了勺子？我想了半天，说：因为鸡蛋还躺在桌上，它还没浮起来呢。

后来我把这个实验写进科学作业里，打翻杯子的事我也写了。我在结尾写：打翻一杯水不要紧，再倒一杯就是了。盐一勺一勺加，失败一次一次来，鸡蛋总会浮起来的。写完我把湿过又晾干的作业本翻开，那一页皱巴巴的，像一小片晒干的云。它比崭新的本子好看。

The Egg Would Not Float, and I Knocked Over the Cup

Our science teacher assigned homework: find a way to make an egg float in water. The moment I got home I opened the fridge, picked out the biggest egg, and dug out a glass. Mom asked if I needed help. I said no, how hard could it be.

I dropped the egg into the glass. It plopped to the bottom and lay flat, like it had fallen asleep. I added salt, one spoonful, and stirred with a chopstick. The salt dissolved, the water clouded a little, and the egg did not move. Getting impatient, I dumped in two more spoonfuls. Stirring, my chopstick tapped the egg, it rolled over, and lay there again.

I lifted the glass to look closer, and my elbow knocked into a pile of blocks

left untidy on the table. The glass tipped. I scrambled to catch it and missed. Splash. The whole cup of salt water spilled. Water ran off the table edge, the egg rolled out, spun once on the tabletop, and stopped beside my homework notebook. One corner of my notebook got soaked.

I froze for two seconds, then tears rushed up. I had been busy for ages, the egg still would not float, the cup had tipped, and my notebook was ruined. I shoved the egg back into the glass, turned around, went to my room, and shut the door.

After a while Mom knocked, came in, said nothing, and placed a dry rag in my hand. We went back to the kitchen, wiped the table dry, and spread the wet notebook open page by page on the windowsill. Mom poured a fresh glass of water and said: keep going, the salt did not all spill. I sniffled and picked up the spoon.

This time I learned my lesson and set the glass far from the table edge. One spoonful of salt, ten stirs, look. Another spoonful, stir again, look again. The water grew cloudier, and a layer of undissolved salt piled at the bottom. I counted. At the fifth spoonful, the egg moved and lifted off the bottom. At the sixth, it wobbled upright. At the seventh, the egg broke the surface, showing a small wet patch of its crown.

I called Mom to look, and the two of us leaned over the table, watching the egg sit steady on top of the salt water. Mom asked: when you knocked the cup over, did you think about giving up? I admitted I did. Mom asked: then why did you pick the spoon up again? I thought a long time and said: because the egg was still lying on the table. It had not floated yet.

Later I wrote this experiment into my science homework, and I wrote about tipping the cup too. My ending line read: spilling a cup of water is no big deal, just pour another. Add the salt spoonful by spoonful, take the failures one by one, and the egg will float in the end. Then I opened my dried, wrinkled notebook. That page was crinkled like a small sun-dried cloud. It looked better than a brand-new page.